On page 1, after the title, please amend the first paragraph to read as follows:

This application is a continuation of U.S. Application Serial No. 09/089,111, now U.S. Patent No. 6,162,965, filed June 2, 1998, which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/098,564, filed June 2, 1997, both of which are herein incorporated by reference in their entireties.

On page 3, please amend the second paragraph to read as follows:

1.1. In one embodiment of the foregoing method, the AIN-inhibiting agent is a chemical inhibitor. The chemical inhibitor is preferably a compound selected from the group consisting of ethylene inhibitors (e.g., 2,5- norbornadiene, norbornene, silver thiosulfate, and silver nitrate), ethylene synthesis inhibitors (e.g., aminoethoxyvinylglycine (AVG), cobalt salts, acetyl salicylic acid, or salicylic acid), gibberellin antagonists (e.g., abscisic acid (ABA)) and phosphatase inhibitors (e.g., okadaic acid). Most preferably, the chemical inhibitor is an ethylene inhibitor, preferably silver nitrate. Proteins and peptides can act as chemical inhibitors as well. Examples are naturally occurring proteins such as DAD-1, the baculovirus inhibitors of apoptosis (IAPs), baculovirus p35, or synthetic peptide analogs of caspases capable of triggering apoptosis. A chemical inhibitor is suitably present in an effective concentration, e.g., for silver nitrate in a concentration of from 0.1 to 20 mg/l, preferably 1 to10 mg/l.

Please amend the paragraph bridging pages 3 and 4 to read as follows:

1.2.1. In an alternative embodiment of this method, the AIN-inhibiting agent is a nucleotide sequence. The AIN-inhibiting nucleotide sequence may inhibit AIN directly or by encoding an AIN-inhibiting mRNA coding for an AIN-inhibiting protein. For example, it may be an antisense oligonucleotide or a gene encoding antisense mRNA, which is antisense to a gene encoding a necrosis associated enzyme (e.g., protease, kinase, or phosphatase) or regulatory protein. Alternatively, it may comprise the

coding region of a gene capable of inhibiting apoptosis under control of a promoter capable of expression in plants, e.g., a coding region of a mammalian bcl-1 gene under control of a promoter capable of expression in plants, a coding region of an apoptosis-inhibiting gene from a baculovirus such as p35 or plAP, or a gene capable of suppressing disease response in plants, e.g., nahG, dad-1, or mlo. An AIN-inhibiting nucleotide sequence expressing an AIN-inhibiting protein may optionally be adapted for expression in the host plant by making a synthetic nucleotide sequence encoding the same protein but using codons which are preferred by the host plant and avoiding nucleotide sequences, e.g., polyadenylation signals or splice sites within the coding region, which may affect optimal expression in the host plant, e.g., analogously to the methods described in U.S. Patent No. 5,380,831 or U.S. Patent No. 5,610,042.

On page 7, please amend the first full paragraph to read as follows:

The *Agrobacterium* is preferably selected from *A. tumefaciens* and *A. rhizogenes*. Preferably the *Agrobacterium* strain is an *A. tumefaciens* strain, most preferably a nopaline-utilizing strain. When the *Agrobacterium* strain is an *A. rhizogenes* strain, it is preferably an agropine- or mannopine-utilizing strain. Most preferably, the *Agrobacterium* is an *Agrobacterium* which does not induce necrosis in Gramineae, e.g., an *Agrobacterium* selected from *A. tumefaciens* strains A and B. *Agrobacterium* strains A and B have been deposited with the American Type Culture Collection (ATCC) 10801 University Boulevard, Manassas, Virginia 20110 / USA, under ATCC Designation numbers 55964 and 55965 respectively on May 2, 1997, pursuant to the Budapest Treaty.

**In the Claims**

Please cancel Claims 1-19 without prejudice or disclaimer.